



Fresh pork to a good quality strip sliced & dried pork

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Sikkam is the term used for a strip sliced & dried pork meat which is usually prepared from fresh pork involving simple processing techniques or traditional method.

The best part of the meat used for processing Sikkam is Loin region; without bone, however, based on meat quality and characteristics, other part of the meats from leg, head and shoulders can also be processed for Sikkam.

Such processing method and consumption of Sikkam had been recorded since immemorial time and has gained popularity in Bhutanese cuisine known as "Sikkam-paa", when prepared as a dish.

In olden days, it was processed and enjoyed only on important occasions such as when conducting annual rituals, celebrations and on marriage ceremonies etc.

However, with the advancement in people's living standards and economy, it has become a centre food for family, public gatherings, celebrations and favourite dish among Bhutanese population.

At present, it is usually being processed involving a simple manual method whereby pork is sliced into thin and long strip using knife, and hung at room

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temperature until it's colour, texture, aroma and moisture content reaches to the acceptable level.

However, none of the consumers have good knowledge to judge quality parameters of the Sikkam and frequently complain on hard and fast marketing rates of meat vendors and quality of Sikkam when everyone rushes for limited stock.

Therefore, this case study on Sikkam was initiated in 1st week to 2nd week of September 2021, to determine the quality of Sikkam with simple judgment using organolaptic test especially by visual, hand feel, sense of smell and weight recording method.

To execute study, three meat shops were identified and sampled. A total of 9 kg fresh pork (loin part); 3 kg from each meat vendor. The samples were strip sliced, tagged with numbers and dried under fan at room temperature.

The daily weight recordings were done from the date of strip sliced with use of digital weighing balance, and evaluation of quality parameters were done based on customers feedback by asking questions if the samples were ready to call as Sikkam. When most of the customers prompted to a consensus answer of 'good quality Sikkam' a team was formed comprising of BAFRA Officials, meat vendors and customers for final evaluation.

The evaluation was done based on weight loss (dryness), colour, texture, aroma and hardness using the scale of good, very good and excellent; the rating scale of good being 5 - 9, Very good 10 - 14 and excellent 15 - 20. Overall, we have observed the following results from this case study:

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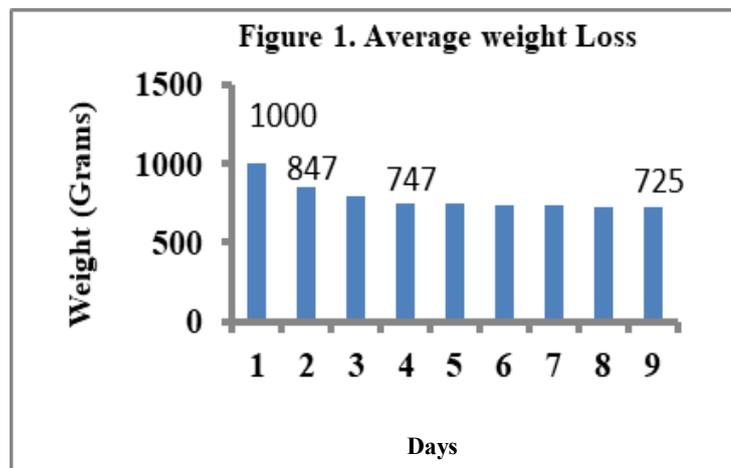


Figure 1. Shows recording of an average weight of the samples and observations made during entire case study. Initially, there was a significant dropdown in weight from 1000 gm to 847 gm but from third day onwards the weight loss was very minimal, and when compared to the lowest weight of 725 gm there was no significant difference between the weight of 4th day and 9th day of the measurement.

However, drying takes time to gain a good quality and characteristics of the Sikkam. Therefore, team concluded that after 3rd day onwards there is no significant weight loss but customers have to look for the quality characteristics.

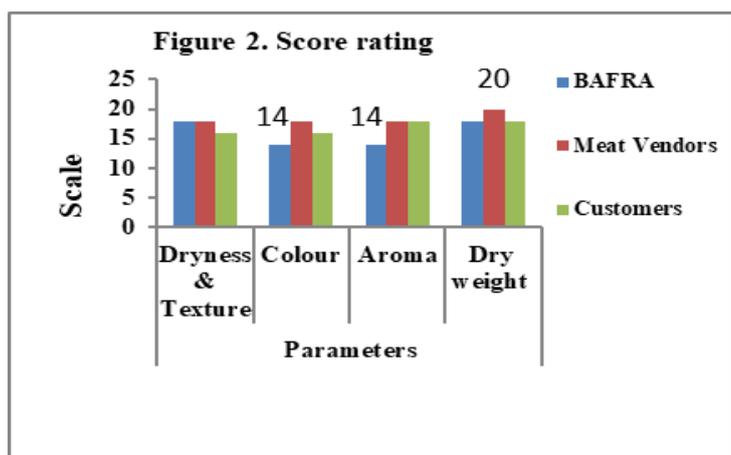


Figure 2. Shows the score rating of the Sikkam (Strip sliced & dried pork) quality against four parameters such as dryness & texture, Colour, aroma and weight by different judges.

Overall, rating was highest under excellent with rating scale score between 16- 20 and lowest under very good with rating scale of 14 score, only. Therefore, team concluded that to process a good quality Sikkam from fresh pork, it requires 9 days of drying period.

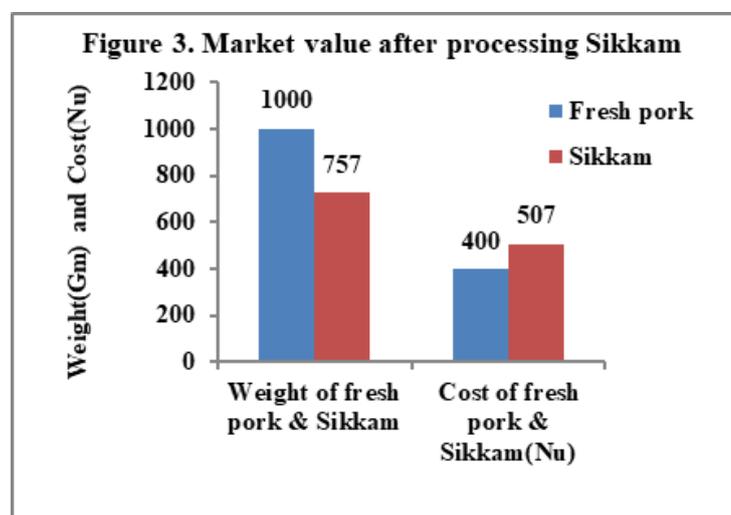


Figure 3. The result shows that there was a difference of 243 grams when compared between fresh weight and average weight of Sikkam (Strip sliced & dried pork).

But, when compared between the selling prices of 1 kg fresh pork and after processing Sikkam, the marginal profit earned from one kilogram of Sikkam is Nu.107 which accounts to be 15 % profit above the fresh selling price; fresh price being Nu.400 and Sikkam Nu.700.

Therefore, team concluded that there is a 15 % profit margin from 1 kilogram of fresh pork when it is processed into Sikkam and sold as Sikkam.



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Conclusion

In conclusion, processing good quality Sikkam (Sliced strip & dried pork) out of fresh pork under room temperature takes 9 days to achieve its good quality parameters. However, weight loss seems to be a very significant at initial stage but negligible after 3rd day onwards.

Further, when compared between selling prices and profit margin, the Sikkam obtained from 1 kilogram fresh pork accounts to be profitable with 15% profit margin above the selling price of one kilogram fresh pork.

Therefore, the final result seems to be positive for those meat vendors who process Sikkam and for those customers who opted for Sikkam should consider quality when compared to weight. In addition, any readers or interested persons can pursue detail study on this particular topic and may share a concrete report on Sikkam (Sliced strip & dried pork) to the general public.



Leisure

Important points to remember during land preparation

Before planting seedlings or sowing seeds, it is important to understand the following 3 things:

1. **Basal fertilizers** have a role of improvement of soil by inputting materials, especially organic matters before planting.
2. **Tillage** is to cultivate and soften physically hard soil by human, livestock and/or machine powers. Mixing organic materials into soil provides a good soil condition for plants growth of plants.
3. **Ridging** is to prepare planting/ seed sowing beds. Considering the land aspects (North, South, East or West), water drainage direction, a place in the morning sunlight and crops planned for cultivation, the location and the direction must be decided.

JOKES



A store manager at a local hardware store overheard the clerk saying to a customer, “No, ma’am, we haven’t had any for some weeks now, and it doesn’t look as if we’ll be getting any soon.”

Alarmed by what was being said, the manager rushed over to the customer who was walking out the door and said, “That isn’t true, ma’am. Of course, we’ll have some soon. In fact, we placed an order for it a couple of weeks ago.” The lady turned, glared at the store manager like he was an idiot, and walked out the door.

Furious, the manager went straight over to the clerk with a sour look on his face. The manager drew the clerk aside and growled, “Never, never, never, never say we don’t have something. If we don’t have it, say we ordered it and it’s on its way. Now, what was it she wanted?”

The clerk replied, “Rain.”

Did you know?

Dolomite is a natural mineral. It is rich in Calcium & Magnesium which are very necessary for the proper plant growth. It works as soil pH adjuster and control some deficiency such as a bottom rot disease on tomato fruits.

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The Ministry's week

Agriculture Minister represents Bhutan at COP26



After a hiatus of two years, the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26 and associated meetings) took place in Glasgow, the United Kingdom from 31 October to 12 November 2021.

The COP26 happened against the backdrop of the latest IPCC Report which showed that unless there are rapid, sustained and large-scale reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, the Paris Agreement goal of 1.5 degree Celsius will

be impossible to reach. It was followed by the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Synthesis Report, an assessment of all national climate action plans, showing that under our current path temperatures could rise to 2.7C, with devastating results for humanity.

The Bhutanese delegation to COP26 is led by Lyonpo Yeshey Penjor, Minister of Agriculture and Forests.

Farmers' Sales Outlet inaugurated at Gedu

The Director of the Department of Agriculture inaugurated the Farmers' Sales Outlet at Gedu under Chhukha Dzongkhag. It was constructed by Chhukha Dzongkhag Administration through the funding support of Food Security and Agriculture Productivity Project.

The program included the



opening of the FSO, handing-over of the structure to the Chhukha Farmers' Cooperatives, local food exhibition and the launching of "Chhukha Natural" products and some of the organic products certified through the Local Organic Assurance System promoted by the National Organic Flagship Program and the National Centre for Organic Agriculture.

World Antimicrobial Awareness Week 2021

World Antimicrobial Awareness Week is observed annually from 18 to 24 of November globally. The main aim of the WAAW is to increase awareness of global antimicrobial resistance and to encourage best practices among the general public, health workers, farmers, animal health professionals and policy makers to avoid the further emergence and spread of drug-resistant

infections.

The World Organisation for Animal Health, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization have been jointly supporting the WAAW since 2015 together with the general public, students, policy makers, and professionals from various sectors around the world.



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